

# PORTLAND OBSERVER

MUST WORK TOGETHER FOR FULL AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT.

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ALFRED LEE HENDERSON, Publisher/Editor

## the Editor's Desk Pattern of discrimination

The only recourse open to us to halt the reapportionment plan that divides Albina into three legislative districts with a black vote of about 10 - 15% each and one with a negligible vote, and into three Senate districts with perhaps 5% black vote and one with a few , is to file suit in the federal court charging discrimination.

This is what is being done in Jackson, Mississippi, where reapportionment eliminated two majority black districts by distributing blacks among five majority white districts.

The Detroit School decision found discrimination based on the planned segregation of blacks by government and private forces was illegal.

A case for a "pattern of discrimination" can easily be made for Oregon. To anyone who has read Oregon history it is clear that since the first white settlement, the political, legal, economic, educational, religious institutions and the news media have combined to isolate blacks from the mainstream of public life and to negate our influence on decisions affecting our lives.

The first wagon trains that brought settlers to the Oregon Country refused blacks. The Provisional Government set up in 1843 banned blacks from residence. When Oregon became a Territory of the U. S. and later a state, it kept its constitution and laws restricting blacks. Prior to and during the Civil War there was no abolitionist movement in Oregon. Oregonians voted in 1857 against slavery for Oregon, not because they were opposed to slavery but because they wanted to avoid contact with blacks - bond or free. At the same time they voted 8 to 1 to continue their ban against blacks living in Oregon. Oregon did not send troops to fight for the Union and its governor said he would never send his militia to fight against his southern brothers.

Following the war, a great deal of legislative time and the major political battles involved the question of whether blacks should vote, although there were about 200 blacks in the state at the time. It brought the overthrow of the Democratic party and the long Republican reign that still continues.

In the early 1920's Oregon was one of the strongholds of the Ku Klux Klan, with the Klan wielding more power than anywhere outside the South. It took over state government in 1921, electing the governor, most major state offices, and controlling the legislature. The Mayor and Chief of Police of Portland were strong supporters and in Portland the Portland Police Vigilantes and the Black Patrol rode with the blessings and authority of the state and the city. So strong was Klan influence that only two newspapers, the Portland Telegram which soon went broke and the Salem Capital Journal, dared oppose it.

The people of Oregon repeatedly voted to keep their laws prohibiting blacks from voting, even though the laws were unconstitutional and unenforceable. Not until 1926 was this restriction removed from the Oregon Constitution.

And, believe it or not, it was not until 1959 that Oregon ratified the 15th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

It was not until the beginning of World War II that there were enough blacks in Oregon to have inspired such tactics. When numbers came to Portland to work in the shipyards, they were crowded into a small section of NE Portland, were given the most menial jobs, were denied union membership, and "white only" signs were posted.

When the shipyards closed and black unemployment was at a serious level, the problem was ignored because Portland still hoped blacks would go away.

This is how the picture remained until the early 1950's, when Oregon's reputation for racism had become so bad across the country that its image as one of the leading states in education and political reform was becoming so tarnished that many leading figures decided that something needed to be done to improve the image.

A number of civil rights bills were passed and the signs came down. Oregon became a leading proponent of equality, but did not give its laws the teeth or its agencies the power and the funds to enforce them properly.

However, Oregon did adopt as its policy: "It is declared to be the public policy of Oregon that practices of discrimination against any of its inhabitants because of race, religion, color, sex or national origin are a matter of state concern and that such discrimination threatens not only the rights and privileges of its inhabitants but menaces the institutions and foundation of a free democratic state."

It is now 1971. Oregon still has no blacks in state, county or city elected offices. No blacks are involved in the law making process. Few blacks have been appointed to policy making boards and commissions, of which Oregon has hundreds.

We are still divided among several legislative districts and still have no hope of electing a black to the Legislative Assembly. It is not the fault of just Secretary of State Clay Myers or even of the legislature. It is the fault of the people of Oregon.

It is the fault of the atmosphere, the "Southern exposure" that has been set and the attitude that has been taught through the years. It is too great for blacks to overcome alone, since whatever we accomplish is unseen or is considered to be too demanding. It is too great for a few well meaning whites who are branded radical. But it is not too great for the Governor, who could appoint blacks to positions of influence and who could work to eliminate racial discrimination in public institutions, or for corporation heads and businessmen who could guarantee the right to meaningful employment and economic security.

And it is not too great for the federal courts.

## Quit following me



Why are you haunting me? We just reapportioned blacks out of their representation and we'll take care of you next!

## Observer's Intercom

In spite of the fact that they represent only 11% of the civilian labor force, blacks and members of other minority races were 18% of the nation's 4.1 million jobless workers in 1970. They were 20% of the total in 1969.

Senator George McGovern, candidate for the presidency, has promised to grant amnesty to men who have evaded the draft for moral reasons.

Rev. Ralph Abernathy told the All-Christian Peace Assembly in Prague about the "oppression, repression, blacks and asked for their intervention before the U. N.

## Minority Report

By James E. Aisbrook, Ph.D.  
AIR FORCE GENERAL SEEKS RACIAL JUSTICE AS NIXON CODDLES SEGREGATIONISTS

While President Nixon is coddling segregationists and trying to out-wallace Wallace, one of his generals is taking constructive action toward reducing racial injustice and strife in the Air Force.

This man of good action is Lt. Gen. George B. Simlar, Commander of the Air Training Command headquarters at Randolph Air Base in Texas.

Seeing violent racial conflict in his own command and at various military installations here and abroad, Gen. Simlar set up a human relations team of officers and enlisted men and asked them to look honestly and carefully for evidences of racial discrimination on the 15 bases he supervises.

### FACTS UGLY

Reporting to Gen. Simlar on July 26, the 15-man team announced that "There is discrimination and racism in the command, and it is ugly."

Gen. Simlar did not like this report, but he got busy and set the base a flutter with seven steps, as follows:

1. He ordered that there be no more discrimination in duty assignment, promotion, enforcement of regulations, and punishment.

2. He increased the number of hours of human relations instruction men receive in basic training, and said all leaders at all levels must face the fact of racism and act against it.

3. He called in junior officers and noncommissioned leaders and told them it was their responsibility to educate their units on good race relations.

Black Representative Shirley Chisholm is in the '72 Presidential race for sure; she will enter primaries in Florida, North Carolina and three other states. Rep. Ron Dellums is supporting her but Rep. John Conyers and Julian Bond feel blacks will have maximum influence at the Democratic Convention by backing several favorite sons.

The Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee approved a bill to give the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission more power to combat job discrimination. The unanimous vote of 7 Republicans and 10 Democrats was a blow to the Nixon Administration which backed a weaker bill.

Undersecretary of the Treasury Charles Walker reported that deposits in minority banks climbed almost 40% in the 12 months ending September 30. Deposits increased \$155.5 million, bringing the total to more than \$500 million for 35 minority banks in the nation.

Nigeria will be the host country for the second World Festival of Black Arts and Culture to be held in September of 1974. The first festival was held in Dakar, Senegal four years ago.

Curtis E. Shaw, president of the National Association of Television and Radio Announcers, an organization of black broadcasters, has recommended to President Nixon that he "demonstrate his political wisdom by appointing a black or minority member to the Federal Communications Commission."

### Crisis in

### The Court

Judge Alfred Burke's recent pronouncement from the bench of D.C. Superior Court that "black is prettily based on my experience with a few people..." is a grave transgression of judicial propriety.

Understandably, Burke harbors some resentment because his father was recently killed during a robbery attempt, but personal anxieties should not be vented while sitting on a bench and being responsible for a man's fate.

Justice traditionally has been blind and unyielding to personal preference and prejudices. A white judge who will outspokenly condemn a man because of his color and who will attest to such stereotypes as blacks are "lazy" has no place on a bench in the District of Columbia.

How ironic the remarks made by this white judge went practically unnoticed by those U.S. Senators who were so quick to criticize Judge Harry T. Alexander for insisting suspects be given the dignity and courtesy of being addressed by their proper titles.

The national judicial system is facing a major credibility crisis at this time. Conscientious citizens of the nation are haunted by the tragedies of Attica and San Quentin prisons.

With the entire criminal justice system under fire and rightly so, there is no room for a judge who will sidestep his judicial duty for his personal leanings.

**The Observation POST**

## Nixon tries again

President Nixon is having a difficult time finding a qualified man or woman who will fit his political specifications for an appointment to the U. S. Supreme Court. In this nation full of attorneys, judges, law school professors and deans, legislators, etc., he cannot find someone who is not tarnished by racism or mediocrity.

His first reported choice declined to be considered because he was afraid his segregationist record would prevent his approval by the Senate. The next two choices, one of whom had spent much of his legal career unsuccessfully defending segregation in the Little Rock Schools, were found to be unqualified by the American Bar Association, itself a highly conservative organization.

Mr. Nixon is in an unusual position. He has already had the opportunity to name four out of the nine Supreme Court positions, and if he is re-elected he will probably name at least two more. Since Supreme Court decisions are not irrevocable and since Supreme Court Justices serve for life, Nixon's appointees could reverse the humanist trend of the Warren Court and encourage the fascist trend in this country for years to come.

It appears that President Nixon is purposely hoping to undermine the influence and respect of the Court by packing it with judges of little reputation. With Congress already giving up much of its power to the President, this would give the Administrative branch frightening power and bring to an end the constitutional concept of "separation of power".

## Arthur Fletcher: Promoted or Squeezed Out at Labor?

Arthur Fletcher, former Assistant Secretary of Labor is no longer at that post. He resigned and accepted an appointment to a 90 day position as alternate delegate for the U. S. to the 26th Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Blacks have lost their most potent member in the upper ranks of the Republican administration. In the U.N. he is virtually powerless and does not have a vote unless sitting for a regular delegate.

This is what has happened to all blacks who were a part of the Nixon Administration and who used their positions to be strong advocates of change. Without doubt, Fletcher was held back by the administration and although he had some degree of success, he did not accomplish what he had hoped when he accepted the Nixon appointment.

While with the Labor Department, Fletcher created the Philadelphia Plan to increase minority workers in the construction trades. He was also a leading advocate of the "home town plans" designed to let local construction industries, labor unions, governments and minority groups solve local problems of discrimination with federal guidance.

As head of the Employment Standards Administration he was responsible for the administration and direction of a program of non-discrimination and affirmative action in government contracts and sub-contracts and in federally assisted construction.

He was responsible for the activities of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance, the Women's Bureau, the Wage and Hour Division and the Bureau of Employee's Compensation.

He administered these programs effectively and his resignation from the Department of Labor raises the suspicion that he was too effective.

Art Fletcher plans to run for the U. S. Senate from the State of Washington. With a seat in the Senate, he would be relatively free from political pressures and could speak out on all issues and concerns. He would be free to use his dedication and his talents to help improve the plight of black workers.

## Guest Editorial U Thant against racism

In probably the most forceful speech he ever made before the United Nations General Assembly, Secretary General U Thant referred to the dangers facing the world by a continuation of senseless discrimination against black people. He begged the Assembly to speed the universal ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenants of Human Rights.

He warned against unchecked colonial oppression of Africans by Europeans in Southern Africa. This policy, if not reversed, he said, "will generate intolerable racial tensions that will inevitably effect the future relations between black Africa and the rest of the world."

U Thant alluded to South Africa's penal system which denies elementary human rights to black prisoners. Had the United States ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, the Attica prisoners would have had their grievances aired before an international tribunal and the massacre at the New York Correction Facility would have been averted.

The Human Rights Covenants were open for ratification December 19, 1966. The United States government has unsearched ways and means to evade the issue. The reason for the evasion is obvious. America does not intend to be a party to provisions of covenants that protect human rights and dignity of the person.

It is one of the baffling paradoxes of our times that a nation that religiously parades itself under the banner of democracy is unwilling to commit itself fully to the moral obligations incidental to its own philosophical declaration.

## The 'Black' Council

There is supposed to be a new awareness of "blackness." We see the emergence of black cosmetic firms designed for milady-beautiful. We see the over abundance of black studies and black art groups and black literature. Sometimes we have seen so much blackness we have feared that some of the other goals in life has been sidetracked while black people ran hither and yon searching and seeking out their heritage.

But the news out of Atlanta, Ga., a week ago was most gratifying. The National Bar Association, composed of the black lawyers of this country held their annual conference. They took a good look at what is happening around country and took some positive and constructive positions.

One they noted the "extraordinary length of time Angela Davis has been held in jail in California and out of a concern for Miss Davis' legal rights appropriated \$2500 for her defense fund. They looked at the bar examinations around the country and concluded that something is radically wrong with the way they are structured. Consequently, the NBA established a committee to study examinations and make recommendations on them based upon black youth's ability to cope with them.

Perhaps the most important thing they did was to establish a Judicial Council of Black Judges. The Council will concern itself, not necessarily to the administration of justice for blacks as they will for the poor as well.

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